

# Rates survey 2006

## Survey of Finnish technical translators' rates

The rates survey was conducted over the Internet in June 2006 using Webropol survey software. The 843 technical translator members of the Finnish Association of Translators and Interpreters who had provided the Association with their e-mail address received an e-mailed invitation to respond to the survey and an individualised Internet address at which to access the questionnaire form. The survey was aimed at translators working in one or more of the ten most frequently represented language pairs among Finnish technical translators.

A total of 239 translators responded to the survey, which is appreciably down on last year's 301. The reason for the diminished interest was unclear, and the decline cannot be fully explained by the fact that the survey only covered the ten most popular language pairs. Those who replied represent 17.6% of all technical translator members of the Association. This means that the response rate dropped back to pre-Internet survey levels.

Most of the respondents (65.0%) had worked as translators for over 10 years, and translating was the main occupation of 78.3% of the respondents. The most common language pairs offered were English to Finnish (59.4%), Finnish to English (55.2%) and Swedish to Finnish (28.9%).

Unlike in previous surveys, in which reported prices could not be associated with individual language pairs, the respondents were able to give source text and target text-specific rates for each of the language pairs queried. Across all language pairs, the number of hours spent was the most frequently reported charging method. Regarding charging according to text length, most translators working with French reported counting the text length in the source language, whereas target text length was overwhelmingly used by those working with Russian. Word, line and page were all used as units of text length. Translators working from Finnish to German were the most consistent group in this respect, with 87% of them using a line-based rate.

The highest VAT-exclusive median rate per line of 60 keystrokes, 2.10-2.19 euros, was found for translations from Finnish to French with source text as the basis for the line count.

### [Line rates most commonly charged by technical translators in 2006](#)

Line rates for the most common language pairs (fi<->en and fi<->sv) showed an interesting anomaly. The target text-based rate was always higher regardless of the direction of translation. This paradoxical situation might be explained by source text-based and target text-based rates representing two distinct subgroups of translators and/or two distinct translation markets. Perhaps source-text based rates are characteristically applied in subcontracting for translation agencies?

Hourly rates for translation and revision varied widely. Reported VAT-exclusive rates ranged from less than 24 euros/hour to more than 84 euros/hour, with translations from Finnish to French again attracting the highest median rate, 48.00-51.99 euros/hour.

In summary, there has been little change in rates since 2005. A trend towards a greater market share being held by translation agencies is apparent in Finland.

The full survey report can be viewed in Finnish on the Association's website at [www.sktl.net](http://www.sktl.net).

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